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BEAUTIFICATION IN FARM HOME SURROUNDINGS MEANS SATISFACTION AND CONTENTMENT

A radio talk by E. L. Stanley, county Agent, Sacramento County, California, delivered in the 4-H club program, National Farm and Home Hour, Saturday, March 3, 1934, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC radio stations.

The agricultural extension service in California is glad to have this opportunity to talk to the 4-H clubs of the nation for a few moments. It seems appropriate at this season of year to leave a few thoughts with you as to how beautification in farm surroundings through the use of trees, shrubs, flowers and lawn, may mean much in terms of satisfaction and genuine contentment.

In Sacramento County, the capital county of California, where it is my privilege to serve as county agent, over 500 farm home grounds have been planned and planted under our supervision during the past ten years. Economy has been a big factor in planning beautification of farm surroundings. Our people here have purchased small sized shrubs which grow into pleasing landscape effects in one or two years time with good care. Some of our more ambitious folks have even propagated their own shrubs from cuttings thus reducing the cost to nothing except a bit more patience and effort.

Some of our 4-H members have made a project of propagating shrubs for use on their home grounds. In some cases they have exchanged planting material among members and a few of the more successful club members have sold surplus plants.

In beautification of farm surroundings whether it be the new place or working over the old, adapt your planting to bring out the best and most characteristic natural landscape features of your locality. For example, the magnolias of the south, the evergreen and holly of the northern states, the elms of New England, the semi-tropical plants of Florida or California, and the flowering hibiscus of farm off Hawaii are all characteristic and should be featured in landscaping the farm surroundings in these sections. Perhaps we might well take a lesson from the English when it comes to making the most of the natural beauty of the countryside. The average Englishmen in rural England seems to have studied nature intently and discovered an exquisite sense of her beautiful forms and combinations. They seem to have caught her coy and furtive graces, and spread them like witchery about their rural abodes.

I have seen in our work here most pleasing landscapes, created by trees and lawn alone with a minimum of shrubbery. Another type of house and grounds calls for a more lavish use of planting material. Plan for permanence in the garden and in planting about the house and grounds. Plan the planting in such a way that it will take a minimum of time and care after once it is set out. The use of short lived annuals or perennials may well supplement this permanent planting of trees and shrubs to lend a brilliance of color in season.

Many of our 4-H club members here have carried on projects in home ground improvement and have made as their community improvement project the planting of their rural school grounds. Tours have aided in stimulating interest. Sometimes the 4-H members visited the home projects of each other, or occasionally a trip was made to see some outstanding example of landscaping such as our State Capitol grounds in Sacramento.

Engraved in stone across the front of one of our agricultural buildings at
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the University of California, facing the Golden Gate, are these words: "To rescue for human society the native values of rural life." What finer opportunity is there to create a richer rural life and appreciation than to study and carry out a plan of beautification in farm surroundings. The hope of rural America is in the farm home.

A house does not make a home, neither does a garden. It's home building we want and it takes thought and hearts and a will for building, both in material and idealistic sense that will go towards the highest development of our rural homes.

Yes, 4-H members, the home ground improvement project offers a real chance **for** service to your home and community.

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